

NATIONAL CONGRESS *Bulletin*



NOVEMBER, 1939

NATIONAL CONGRESS OF PARENTS AND TEACHERS
600 South Michigan Boulevard Chicago, Illinois

Vol. 7 — No. 3

Dear Local President:

A parent-teacher association composed of busy, enthusiastic, courageous members is an organization which offers to the community, and thereby to the country at large, evidence of the strength and purpose of its people.

Throughout our country individuals are concerned with insistent problems — problems of poverty and unemployment and conflict, of health and security and education.

As local president you will seek ways and means of making your association a help to your members in meeting these problems.

Our task is this: to put our organization effectively at work on plans and undertakings which express the ambitions and interests and abilities of the members, and which meet the needs of the world about them.

Out of such concern grows a functioning parent-teacher program. In the degree that we recognize, accept, and develop this program as our own contribution — to that degree we shall find happiness in its achievement.

Ours is a great task and a compelling challenge.

Loyally yours,

Frances S. Pettengill

President
National Congress of Parents and Teachers

WHAT LOCAL P.T.A.'s ARE DOING

THE 1939 reports of the national chairmen reveal types of specific activities and projects in which local parent-teacher associations are engaged the country over.

Among these activities, parent-teacher associations —

Sponsored art classes, lectures, exhibits, tours, hobby shows.

Made surveys of juvenile delinquency in the community.

Held conferences on youth problems.

Developed special projects to meet local problems of pellagra, hookworm, tuberculosis.

Promoted medical examinations of adolescents.

Organized radio listening groups to discuss broadcasts on homemaking.

Sponsored style reviews by high-school girls.

Provided World Friendship bookshelf.

Sponsored highschool dances.

Supervised summer playgrounds.

Participated in demonstration of a regional book automobile service.

Kept school library open in summer.

Established parents' bookshelves.

Established local film libraries.

Secured playground sites.

Cleared and equipped vacant lots for summer playgrounds.

Sponsored organizations for children and youth — troops, councils, packs, clubs.

Compiled and distributed information on vocational opportunities for rural youth seeking employment in cities.

Provided clothing, local scholarship funds, hot lunches, carfares, and books for needy students.

Transported children and their parents to and from offices of physicians and dentists for Summer Round-Up examinations.

PUBLICATIONS FOR FOUNDERS DAY

• Founders Day, February 17, 1940, the 43rd anniversary of the founding of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, will be observed by nearly 30,000 local parent-teacher associations throughout the United States.

• Program material for Founders Day has been prepared by the National Congress for the use of local associations and will be ready for distribution in January.

• A pamphlet containing Founders Day pageants will be mailed direct from the National Office to the president of each local Congress unit.

• A second pamphlet, *Milestones Along the Way*, containing excerpts from writings and addresses of the eight presidents of the National Congress will also be mailed direct to local presidents.

• A history of the early years, a book presenting the story of the founding and growth of the National Congress, will be published in January. Price, 25 cents.

• *Through the Years*, an intimate record compiled from clippings and scrapbooks kept by Mrs. David O. Mears, originator of Founders Day, is now priced at 25 cents.

• The pamphlet, *General Information*, which was mailed to local units last summer also contains Founders Day material.

• The *National Parent-Teacher* magazine is publishing a series of articles, "Projects and Purposes for Parent-Teacher Associations," tracing the growth and development of many phases of parent-teacher activity from their beginnings up to the present time. \$1 a year.



SIGNPOSTS AND GUIDES

Sharing in Progress

"For the effective functioning of education, parents must share with teachers an understanding of the objects and methods of the public school."

— FROM THE 1939 CONVENTION FINDINGS

DURING the past forty years the programs and the practices of American schools have changed greatly. A new curriculum still retains as a major aim competent scholarship through mastery of subject matter; but it makes an increased emphasis upon the development through life situations of desirable attitudes, habits, ideals, tastes, and appreciations.

Through wide and rich experiences the kind of learning takes place which is not purely a matter of acquiring information, but which also brings about changes in the thinking and attitudes of girls and boys.

A review of public school education reveals countless examples of the effectual working-out of some of the newer offerings. Of these, five phases call for the special interest and understanding of parents and consequently are of particular significance for consideration by parent-teacher associations.

APPRECIATION OF BOOKS

- An important aim of the school of today is to teach the child to know, to love, and to use the printed page. The ability to read well, fluently, understandingly, and to share and report what is read is the first and fundamental step. It is accompanied by other learnings: the care and handling of books; appreciation and use of libraries and library facilities; skill in the use of catalogs, indexes to periodicals, and reference materials; the choice and purchase of books for the child to possess and to give to others; the preparation of bibliographies for the individual student's use in connection with his hobbies, interests, and studies; understanding of the place of books and literature in the history of mankind.

OCCUPATIONAL GUIDANCE

- Of major importance in the schools of today are programs of guidance activity. Increasingly, guidance is given not only on "how to live" but also on "how to make a living." Schools

give students information about possible employment opportunities in given fields and at the same time assist them in discovering their own general and particular qualifications. The modern school is equipped to help students answer such questions as these: How shall I choose my vocation? What can I do best? What vocations are less crowded? How can I learn to adjust myself to immediate surroundings? What do I need to know about getting along with people? Through its assistance in supplying answers to these and kindred questions the school endeavors to produce useful workers and valuable citizens.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION

- Problems of the conservation of natural resources are today included with increasing frequency in the programs of rural and city schools alike. Children respond with unusual interest to a consideration of the conservation problems of their own immediate environment. Safeguarding the soil; salvaging the forests; saving fast-disappearing trees and flowers; retaining water supplies; establishing and maintaining bird refuges; protecting wild life, fish and game; setting aside parks and forests, great areas for recreation and the enjoyment of natural beauty — by making these problems topics for study and experience, schools are preparing citizens who are ready and eager to check their ancestors' ravages upon the heritage of the Nation.

EDUCATION BY RADIO

- Modern communication has brought the world to the doors of thousands of schools, and teachers are discovering ways in which to use the radio through both in-school and out-of-school programs. Children are introduced to eminent persons by radio addresses; they become familiar with the significant topics and events of the day; they learn to understand and appreciate the musical, literary, and dramatic compositions which are their cultural heritage. The use of the radio

is fast becoming a first aid in realizing the objectives of the school curriculum.

LEARNING EXPERIENCES

- Both as individuals and as members of a group, pupils of our schools are learning through living experiences — experiences in the classroom and on the school playground; experiences with growing things and all the great outdoors; experiences with home, industrial, recreational, and civic life within the community; experiences with national and world events.

The school makes these experiences possible in three ways. *First:* It provides materials — wood, metal, craft and art materials; pictures, collections, the simpler tools of farm and industry; aquaria — replete with fish and snails and turtles; models of machines; seed gardens — for peas and grapefruit and grass; and books. *Second:* It offers opportunity for firsthand observation and discovery through visits and trips to farms, waterworks, firehouses, dairies, canneries, courts, railroad stations, forests, hospitals, farmers' cooperatives, police stations, and every other spot, rural or urban, where vital community activities are being carried on. *Third:* It provides stimulus and occasion for these facts to be reconstructed through class discussion, the written word in prose or verse, experiments in the simple details of daily life in kitchen and barn and basement workshop, the output of painting and drawing and clay modelling, all the expressions of the child's inner growth.

Widened interests start the pupil hunting for more and still more facts, make him conscious of his need for developing the fundamental skills in reading, figuring, writing, and evaluating. In its emphasis on living experiences the school is writing a story of progress.

• • •

OUR American schools strive toward the attainment of these two goals — increased opportunities for enriched living and social well-being, and the best development of each individual child's ability. Parents and teachers unite in the endeavor to provide for all children the environment in which free, dynamic, and creative individuals can be prepared for tasks of a democratic order.

THROUGH THE YEAR WITH THE P.T.A.



November: The Community Participates

THE meeting of the parent-teacher association is the yardstick by which the whole organization is measured. The P.T.A. may increase its efficiency and value to the community through providing meeting programs which are interesting, stimulating, and satisfying to members. The enrichment of the program for each meeting will go a long way toward insuring meetings which will be so helpful and enjoyable that members will want to attend regularly and take part in other parent-teacher work.

The enrichment of the program may be accomplished in a variety of ways, by employing various devices for the purpose of appealing to the different needs and interests of members. While program schedules should be planned well in advance, they should be kept flexible in order that a timely topic or a new type of presentation may be introduced as occasion arises.

Many P.T.A.'s have discussion groups of the forum or panel type which have proved of great interest and value. For enrichment of discussion programs of either the forum or panel type, new methods and ideas are being introduced.

HAVE YOU TRIED—

I. One of these interesting groups of participants?

Representatives of various nationalities

Representatives of other organizations — service clubs, youth groups, and civic agencies

Representatives of different local trades
Youngest individuals and oldest individuals in membership

Fireman, policeman, postman, school attendance officer, taxi driver

Grandparents

Doctor, dentist, lawyer, editor, nurse, librarian, minister

School bus driver, school janitor, rural mail carrier, manager of gas station, telephone exchange operator

Is your program developing —

- Ability of members to think together
- Membership participation
- Aroused interest in education
- Democratic cooperation between home and school
- Community responsibility
- Participation in civic activities

II. Unusual sources of questions for discussion?

By vote of school children

Suggestions made by school board or civic groups

Important editorials in local papers

Articles in school papers

Local motion picture offerings

Recent books — fiction and non-fiction

III. Different methods of securing audience participation?

Plant a few questions in advance among the audience.

Allow ample time for discussion from the floor.

Limit each participant as to number of minutes and number of times he may speak.

Call on persons in the audience known to be well informed on the topic.

Keep the tone of the general discussion optimistic, good humored, and cheerful.

WHAT DO DISCUSSION PROGRAMS ACCOMPLISH?

Each local association may well ask itself such questions as these:

What does discussion by the P.T.A. do for the community?

Does discussion by the P.T.A. help people to obtain a better understanding of important educational questions?

Do members change their attitudes as a result of P.T.A. experience?

Does action follow discussion of community problems?

Do P.T.A. discussion programs result in social improvement?

HOW DO PUBLICATIONS SUPPLEMENT DISCUSSION PROGRAMS?

Congress publications serve the membership in the following ways:

They present the program of ideals and policies which has developed through forty years; bring to each member the objects of the national organization; offer material for carrying on various phases of the Congress program; offer a medium through which the message and plans of officers and chairmen may reach the Congress membership; outline for Congress units programs, plans, and procedures which may be adapted to local conditions; record the growth of the movement and the part it is playing in current educational movements; bring to the public a realization of the importance of this nationwide movement which concerns itself with the welfare of children and youth.

EXCELLENT DISCUSSION RESOURCES

Freedom for Growth — A book containing reprints of the addresses and panel symposiums from the *Proceedings* of the 1939 National Convention.

Schools for Democracy — A book containing the story of the development of public schools in America and the part they play in preserving and perfecting democracy.

Purposes of Education — A pamphlet containing reprints of articles published in the *National Parent-Teacher*.

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National Congress of Parents and Teachers
600 South Michigan Boulevard
Chicago, Illinois

Local Unit Report 1939-1940

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill in or check only those items which apply specifically to your unit.
2. Secure from other officers and chairmen of the association information needed to complete the report.
3. This report when completed should be mailed as instructed.

Name of Association.....

Post Office, Town or City.....

County.....

President 1939-40.....

Address.....

Person submitting report.....

Address.....

CHECK (✓)

I. TYPE OF ASSOCIATION

1. { Open country.....
- { Village or town with less than 2500 population.....
- { Town or city with more than 2500 population.....

2. { Elementary school.....
- { Junior or senior highschool.....
- { Highschool and elementary combined.....
- { College or normal school.....
- { Preschool.....
- { Other.....

3. { Public school.....
- { Private school.....
- { Parochial school.....
- { Other.....

II. MEMBERSHIP

Total number of members.....

III. PROGRAMS

1. State the main theme for your year's program.....

2. List below the topics of your monthly programs.





NATIONAL PARENT-TEACHER

News About Our Magazine

WE HAVE JUST HEARD THAT...

A judge in Michigan quoted in the courtroom from an article in the November issue of the *National Parent-Teacher*. The article was "For Want of a Nail."

A member of the Magazine staff, who was searching for current parent education references in a Chicago library, was brought a copy of the *National Parent-Teacher* as "the best thing we have on parent education."

An Indian P.T.A. in South Dakota has subscribed for three copies because the illustrations "are so real" and the articles "easy to follow."

A child welfare magazine in Madras, India, has reprinted an article from the August-September issue.

One of the panel participants at a recent forum in New York City, a noted educator and writer, arrived at the meeting with a copy of the *National Parent-Teacher* and called attention "to the unusually fine material in this magazine on the subject which we are discussing."

A study group leader in Colorado is using "two study courses in the Magazine — the regular course on 'American Youth' and a 'supplementary course' based on such articles as 'Adolescent Companionship' and 'Emotional Ties that Hinder.'"

A school superintendent in Ohio, eager to have "the P.T.A. join the state and National," sent for ten subscriptions because he was sure the members "would want to belong to the organization after reading its official magazine."

An instructor in a C.C.C. camp in Pennsylvania is using the Magazine in his classes on "Human Relationships."

A small P.T.A. in Vermont has based its entire program on articles from the *National Parent-Teacher*.

IF your association has not yet begun to make maximum use of its official national magazine, we urge you to *put it to work immediately*. It contains the kind of material that will help to develop an active interest in the program of the association and in the objects of the organization.

WRITING FOR THE DECEMBER ISSUE...

FRANCES PERKINS, Secretary of Labor. Her concern for the workers of America has always included the welfare

A Reminder —

Has your P.T.A. availed itself of the offer in the September BULLETIN? We are sending every association that sends us two new *National Parent-Teacher* subscriptions before December 31, 1939, an attractive *Accounting Set* for the use of the local treasurer. The Set will be sent when two new subscriptions are forwarded provided we receive: (1) name and address of the person sending the subscriptions, (2) name of the P.T.A., and (3) a definite request for the *Accounting Set*.

of America's children, and many will welcome her editorial in the December issue.

STUART CHASE, renowned social and economic critic. Since 1922 Mr. Chase has been director of the Labor Bureau, a research organization. Among his

most recent books are *The Tyranny of Words* and *The New Western Front*.

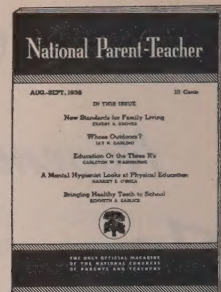
ROBERT P. TRISTRAM COFFIN is a distinguished figure in the literary world. His book of poems, *Strange Holiness*, won in 1936 the Pulitzer prize. His prose includes essays, biographies, and novels. His many reader friends are looking forward to his "Recipe for Christmas" in the December issue.

JOHN E. ANDERSON, director of the Institute of Child Welfare of the University of Minnesota. Dr. Anderson is chairman of the committee on the Exceptional Child for the National Congress of Parents and Teachers. Two of his notable publications are *Happy Childhood* and *The Young Child in the Home*.

S. RAE LOGAN, assistant superintendent of schools in Winnetka, Illinois. Mr. Logan has always been interested in conservation of country life and in tax and school reforms. Schools under his administration have been known for their character as self-governing communities, the members of which engage actively in the life of the larger community.

FRANCES ZUILL is director of home economics at the University of Wisconsin. Miss Zuill has served as secretary and president of the American Home Economics Association. She is coauthor of the book, *The Family's Food*, and a frequent contributor of home economics articles to professional magazines.

GEORGE D. STODDARD, director of the Iowa Child Welfare Research Station. Dr. Stoddard's books, articles, lectures, and researches have established him as one of the most influential figures in his field.



A TOKEN OF APPRECIATION... The *National Parent-Teacher* contains articles and features of particular interest to educators. Realizing this and wishing to introduce the Magazine to their school people, many P.T.A.'s give their school principal a subscription to the *National Parent-Teacher*. The holiday season is an excellent time to extend this token of esteem and appreciation to those who, with vision and training, are making such a magnificent contribution to civic welfare through their teaching of children and youth. An appropriate gift card, bearing your name as president and the name of your P.T.A., will be sent to *your school principal* upon receipt of the subscription.